



crucial
conversations®

A PERSONAL SUCCESS STORY

Crucial Conversations That Work

As a result of applying the Crucial Conversations skills, I have experienced significant improvements in my relationship with my boss, I have increased confidence at work, and feel greater mutual respect.



– Clara Burns, Boulder, CO

I found the Crucial Conversations book while perusing the business section of a bookstore and realized it was exactly what I needed to support my divorce negotiations with my husband.

I quickly put the skills to practice, and they helped me through a period of difficult and even impossible conversations with my husband. Through focusing on “what

I really wanted” and using the other skills, my husband and I came to agreement on the divorce terms. I was able to remain open-minded and diffuse his defensiveness.

“Through focusing on ‘what I really wanted’ and using the other skills, my husband and I came to agreement on the divorce terms. I was able to remain open-minded and diffuse his defensiveness.

Our hearing took 20 minutes, much to the surprise of the judge, who said it was a notable exception to the rule.”

—Clara Burns

Our hearing took 20 minutes, much to the surprise of the judge, who said it was a notable exception to the rule.

Ironically, during this period I also began to have difficulty with my boss at work. The conflict undermined my motivation and caused feelings of depression, anger, and fear I would lose my job. My relationship with my boss seemed to be a new version of the dysfunctional relationship that had existed in my marriage! I also discovered that many people who reported to my boss were having the same difficulty.

So, again I applied my newly acquired Crucial Conversations skills. Focusing on “what I really wanted” helped me clarify my goals, identify problems, effectively gather information, and refrain from becoming defensive. Mastering my stories and stating the facts allowed me to maintain perspective and bolster my self-confidence enough to share my concerns. I wrote up a factual account of the disturbing interactions I had experienced and filed it, but did not need to use it. My goal was not to “fix” my boss, but rather to support a healthy and constructive working relationship. I applied the principles and communicated my concerns honestly and candidly.

During our conversations, I practiced better listening skills, including mirroring and maintaining mutual purpose. These skills gave me a less emotional and a more action-oriented approach to solutions, and I was able to identify areas of concern, ask important questions, gather information, and refrain from descending into emotionalism, accusations, or defensiveness.

Far from losing my job, I recently passed my performance review and was given a raise. As a result of applying the Crucial Conversations skills, I have experienced significant improvements in my relationship with my boss, I have increased confidence at work, and feel greater mutual respect. I also have fewer negative work experiences, and I receive more positive feedback.

The whole experience of putting these skills into practice, both at home and at work, has broadened my self-awareness, as well as boosted my confidence and likelihood for success.

About Crucial Conversations

Whenever you're not getting the results you're looking for, it's likely that a crucial conversation is keeping you stuck. Whether it's a problem with poor quality, slow time-to-market, declining customer satisfaction, or a strained relationship, if you can't talk honestly, you can expect poor results.

This award-winning training infuses classroom time with original video clips and examples. Course pacing is active and engaging, with structured rehearsals and intense class participation. The Crucial Conversations course delivers a powerful set of influence tools that builds teams, enriches relationships, and improves end results. Participants acquire the skills that help them step up to and handle high-stakes issues.